

The Lebanon News

"Russell County's Family Newspaper Since 1880"

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First Community Emergency Response Team Training Held

Southwest Virginia Community College (SWCC) and Russell County Emergency Management (RCEM) hosted the first ever Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training at the Russell County Conference Center July 25-27 for seventeen courageous participants.

These participants will serve as the initial Campus CERT for SWCC and for Russell County in the event of an incident where trained personnel are needed prior to the arrival of professional emergency providers.

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire, citizen protection, and medical services will not be able to meet the demand for these services. Factors such as the number of

victims, communication failures, and road blockages will prevent people from accessing emergency services they have come to expect at a moment's notice through calls to Russell County 9-1-1. People will have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

With great effort and to Russell County's benefit, Dr. Betsy Summerfield with SWCC recently was certified to conduct the CERT Training. CERT training is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their

own and their immediate actions can make a difference.

Discipline specific instructors introduced the following CERT concepts: CERT Overview and Operations (Dr. Betsy Summerfield, SWCC); Fire Safety (Brad Cook and Bryce Barrett, Lebanon Volunteer Fire Department); Disaster Medical Operations to treat the three killers by opening airways, controlling bleeding and treating for shock, basic medical and first aid, and search and rescue victims operations (Lavelle Hartsock, Lebanon Lifesaving Crew); CERT Organization (Dr. Betsy Summerfield, SWCC); Disaster Preparedness (Jess Powers, RCEM); Disaster Psychology (Linda Gambill, SWCC); Terrorism and CERT responses (Chris Snead, SWCC and Russell County School Board) and gang awareness and safety (Eddie Williams, Wytheville Community College).

As an end result, the CERT training developed the participant's skills to become effective CERT members and citizen volunteers.



Practice and demonstration of fire extinguishing.



Practice of a patient lift.